# MEMORIAL SERVICES

IN HONOR OF

# JAMES J. BARCLAY,

Late President of the House of Refuge,

ADDRESS BY

JOSEPH PATTERSON, Esq.,

OCTOBER 20, 1885.

---

PHILADELPHIA:
FRANKLIN PRINTING HOUSE,
1885.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
This project is made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries

https://archive.org/details/memorialservices00patt

# MEMORIAL SERVICES

IN HONOR OF

# JAMES J. BARCLAY,

**Late President of the House of Refuge.**

---

On the twentieth of October, 1885, the children of the House and a large number of distinguished citizens and guests were assembled in the Chapel of the Institution, in response to the invitation of the Board of Managers.

The President, Mr. Frederic Collins, stated the object of the occasion as follows:

It was with feelings of profound sorrow we received the announcement, on the sixteenth day of August last, of the death of our beloved friend, James J. Barclay, the late venerable President of this Institution; and we are assembled in this chapel to-day, to pay a loving tribute to his memory and to record his valuable services, commencing with the organization of this noble charity, and continuing for the lengthened period of nearly sixty years.

We cannot measure the value of the benefits which Mr. Barclay has conferred on the House of Refuge. It was not only at the appointed meetings of the Board of Managers, over which he so long and acceptably presided, or was it alone in the deliberations of its special committees, that his ripe experience and judicious counsel influenced the adoption of measures which have proved so salutary and efficient for its success, but it was his sympathetic spirit and his earnest solicitude for the welfare of our wards that

made him always a welcome visitor among them when he impressed their minds with the principles of moral truths and religious obligations.

The memory of Mr. Barclay will ever be held in grateful affection by his associates of this and other Institutions, where his philanthropic labors were pre-eminent, and will be cherished by generations to come of those, who, animated by the same benevolent spirit and impelled by their love to God and recognition of their duties to their fellow beings, will devote their time and efforts for the elevation of the wayward and degraded and the relief of the distressed and suffering.

A portion of the Scriptures was read and a prayer offered by the Rev. Dr. Davies, Rector of St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church, of which Mr. Barclay was a member.

The children sang a number of appropriate hymns.

Mr. James V. Watson, Vice-President of the House, then said:

Conscious that the inestimable value of the services of James J. Barclay, late President of the House of Refuge, called for some visible record of his interest and labor in the Institution, the Board of Managers have had prepared a tablet commemorative of his life and character, and it has been placed upon the wall of the chapel beside his portrait; and in order to make it a part of this memorial ceremony, I now present it to the House, unveil, and read the inscription upon it:

IN MEMORY OF

JAMES JOSEPH BARCLAY,

Born January 15th, 1794,

Died August 16th, 1885,

One of the Founders of the House of Refuge.

As Manager, Secretary, Vice-President, and President for more than half a century, he was devoted to its interests, cheering the children with his presence and encouraging them with his counsel.

Kind and sympathetic by nature, humane and beneficent in his purposes, he was regardless of his private interests, to promote the reformation of erring children, the welfare of the deaf mute, and the alleviation of the miseries of public prisons.

As a philanthropist he fulfilled the injunction:

"Be not weary in well-doing."

Passed from his labors to eternal rest, his example is a precious legacy to his successors.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Mr. Joseph Patterson then delivered the following address:

The rapid flight of more than the Psalmist's threescore and ten years has made me the survivor of many friends, whose lives have compelled the respect, and attracted the affection of those who knew them best; and whose deaths have left to those who have survived them, an inheritance of sorrow, and of tender and loving memories. It is of James J. Barclay, one of the worthiest, and in some respects, one of the most notable of these friends, that, in obedience to your behest, I am here to speak to-day.

The bond of friendship which bound me to Mr. Barclay was of more than half a century's growth, and it was broken only by his death. As I stand here to-day, there crowd upon my mind, memories of countless acts of kindness done by him, with that instinctive courtesy, which gave to him his undisputed claim to "the grand old name of gentleman."

Under the pressure of these recollections, I forget my inability to do justice to the subject, and to the occasion, and I remember only, that it is a duty to assist in honoring the memory of one, whose life was consecrated to the service of humanity.

On January 15th, 1884, we assembled in this room, to celebrate the ninetieth anniversary of Mr. Barclay's birth. On that occasion, there were two prominent figures on this floor, one the grateful recipient of the honors of which he was so

worthy, the other, Mr. Eli K. Price, distinguished as a lawyer, and as a citizen, and full of years, and honors. All who then heard Mr. Price will remember how feelingly and lovingly he spoke of his friend. The eulogist, and the subject of his pathetic tribute, are not here to-day. They have both gone hence.

To-day we assemble for another, and a different purpose; then we met to place the laurel on the brow of the living, with the wish for continued life in health; now, we meet to recall memories of the dead, and to plant the cypress on a grave we would not willingly neglect.

On Front Street below Walnut Street, in the old city of Philadelphia, on January 15th, 1794, in the first year of General Washington's second Presidential term, and less than seven years after the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, a child was born; on August 16th, 1885, in the same city, under the administration of the twenty-second President of the United States, an old man died. The more than ninety-one years between those dates, was the earthly life of James J. Barclay. A great nation, and a great city grew up and expanded with his growth. He had reached nearly middle life, before a railroad had been constructed or a steamship had traversed the ocean, and before he died, the locomotive engine and the telegraph had overcome the disintegrating force of distance.

The few important facts of his uneventful life can be briefly stated.

He came of honorable parentage. He was the son of a gentleman who was one of Philadelphia's earliest merchants, and who was Mayor of the city at a time when that office was justly regarded as the highest prize of good citizenship. He was graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1812, and at a very early age for such service, he volunteered as a defender of his country, in the then pending war with Great Britain; and served at Camp Dupont until he was honorably discharged from military service.

He studied law with James Gibson, Esq., was admitted to the Bar on September 26th, 1815, and by the death of Mr.

Binney, in 1876, he became the senior member of the Philadelphia Bar. His natural ability, and general and special learning, would doubtless have given him success in his profession, but he preferred to work for the poor and friendless without pay, rather than to seek wealth and fame for himself. In 1819 he became a member of the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons, and he thenceforward actively participated in the work of that Society.

Mr. Barclay was for many years, beginning more than half a century since an active and efficient Director of the Public Schools, and President of the Board of Controllers. He was President of the Apprentices' Library. He was almost from its foundation a Manager and Secretary of the Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, and he acquired a sufficient knowledge of the sign language, to converse with the silent children of that Institution.

In January, 1826, Mr. Barclay reported to the Prison Society from a committee consisting of Bishop White, Roberts Vaux, and others, "That a House of Refuge for juvenile offenders ought to be established, and that a meeting of the citizens of Philadelphia be called for that purpose." An address to the citizens was accordingly prepared, with the signature of Bishop White as President; and Mr. Barclay was one of the Committee to make the necessary arrangements.

On the minutes of the Society Mr. Barclay's name appears as having been present at all meetings, and on every committee appointed in regard of the proposal to establish a House of Refuge, and I am sure that his manifestly deep interest in it greatly promoted the success of the effort.

The title of "The Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons," expressed its purpose, and the necessity for its action. The prisons were then the only public provision made for the care and custody of the pauper lunatic, and the criminal; and both sexes and all ages were habitually confined within the same walls, and not infrequently in the same rooms. Hence it was that Mr. Barclay interested himself to secure the provision

of a House of Refuge for the young of both sexes, where they would not be exposed to the baleful influence of expert criminals.

On May 1st, 1826, a meeting of the contributors was held to elect a Board of Managers of the House of Refuge, at which Mr. John Sergeant was elected President, and Mr. Barclay, Secretary, and at that meeting it was resolved to construct the necessary buildings at Ridge Road and Coates Street.

Mr. Barclay continued as Secretary of the Board until January, 1850, when he became Vice-President, and in 1869, he was elected President, and continued to hold that office and discharge its duties most faithfully until his decease, on August 16th, 1885.

From his limited means, Mr. Barclay gave to the House of Refuge a liberal sum of money for investment, the proceeds to be given annually as rewards of merit to pupils of the Institution. This added to a gift of the late Thomas P. Cope, is known as the Cope and Barclay Fund.

In this brief, and necessarily imperfect narrative regarding Mr. Barclay's relation to the several charities with which he was connected, I have not exhibited him to you fully.

This city is distinguished for its many organized charities, founded by the munificence of some of its wealthy citizens, and these founders are rightly honored for their generous gifts, and their names perpetuated, and held in grateful association with the Institutions they have established.

Mr. Barclay had not wealth in money to give, but he freely and lovingly gave all he had, a noble life of constant labor for the promotion of human welfare.

It can be truly said, I think, that men are more reverenced after death, and their memories more cherished, the more their lives were devoted conscientiously and intelligently to the service of their fellow creatures, and the less they have worked merely for their own aggrandizement, pleasure, or personal gratification.

John Howard, whose life of active practical benevolence has made his name the most illustrious in the annals of philan-

thropy, is almost the only one whom all men, of all nations and creeds, agree to honor. He began his noble and self-denying work without high social position, wealth, or unusual intellectual power or accomplishments; nor was he of great force, except in one direction. Weak he may have been in the world's estimation, but he was strong enough to hear the voice of his Divine Master, saying, "Do unto one of the least of these as ye would do it unto me," and he took up his arduous and heroic work, for which the time had come in the world's great need, and his disinterested beneficence was a force in the extension of Christianity.

Our departed friend, in whose memory this commemorative service is held to-day, from his early manhood to his extreme old age, lived and labored in the faith that inspired Howard, not in a desultory, indefinite way, not fitful nor capricious, but calm, equable, and persistent, without haste and without rest.

I am sure that all who knew Mr. Barclay's methods, will agree with me in saying that, in addition to his board and committee duties, which were never neglected, his personal contact with the beneficiaries of these charities was most salutary.

He expressed not only benevolent feeling, but that Christian philanthropy in which are bound together religion and morals, inspiring the deep and strong affections which the sublime lessons of Christ teach, and making benevolence not merely emotional but practical, by associating moral principle and feeling with our daily lives and work, and exhibiting the prominent feature of the Christian religion on its practical side—the power of self-sacrifice.

I have seen Mr. Barclay give to the prisoner in his cell kind encouragement, and assistance to enforce wise discipline to reform his habits, Christian instruction to affect his heart; and when he saw the penitent and returning sinner a great way off, he sought to lift him from his degradation, and not drive him back to lower depths of infamy.

I know that there is a prevalent morbid sympathy too often expressed for the criminal, that does not condemn the crime; but philanthropy, as taught by Christ, abhors the sin, yet commise-

rates the sinner so far as to labor for his reformation, and to all objections of doubt or hopelessness of reformation of the outcast of society, Christianity replies that the Divine pity did not scorn the tears wept by the repentant Magdalen, and that there was once a criminal and a convict to whom, in the most solemn hour of supreme importance in the world's history, the gospel was preached in his dying agony, and the penitent thief received the Divine promise that he would be that day with the preacher in paradise.

There are, doubtless, some here to-day who will recall Mr. Barclay's ministries of mercy, when he read and asked them to commit to memory, psalms and sacred songs, and parts of Holy Writ, and especially the fifty-first psalm in its penitential utterances, as expressive of the needs of the soul of man to-day, as it was when it was written ; and, if I am not mistaken, there are some here now who remember with deep emotion lessons they received from his lips, which brought to them penitence and hope, and, with the blessing of God, were largely the means of reclaiming them from lives of sin and misery.

The biography of any man rarely discloses his life as it was lived. Almost every one who thinks and feels, and who is old, or growing old, knows the pathos of age, and bears about with him the sense of a great solitude. As our departed friend in his later years walked our streets with bowed head, bent form, and measured footfall, with the calm and benignant countenance of one who could look all men kindly in the face, there was a depth and strength of sympathy and affection not visible to the passer-by. He never had a home, or slept under a roof he could call his own. His solitary life was not lighted by the beauty and blessing of domestic love, and so far as sympathy and affection in the closest of human relations is essential to happiness he was isolated. He often spoke with sadness of the almost inevitable loneliness of old age, but this feeling never obscured his vision of human suffering, nor diminished his desire to prevent or relieve it.

If any word I say, or omit to say, will leave the impression

in the mind of any one, that Mr. Barclay's life-work was the expression only of a kind and sympathetic nature, I would do dishonor to his Christian character, for I believe that it was an enlightened conscience that gave direction to his kindly impulses, and that "he lived as ever in his great Taskmaster's eye," and that he illustrated the graces of a Christian character, in the spirit and temper of his mind and the unselfish purposes of his life, and that his high moral qualities were not so much the expression of a natural amiability, as they were the fruit of a Christian faith, that works by love, and is the fulfilling of the law.

I wish to present Mr. Barclay to you, as he appeared to me, and as I believe he was. If I were asked to say what were his striking characteristics, I would reply, sincerity, purity, benevolence and humility. A sincerity which was transparency itself; a purity on which for more than ninety years there was not blot nor blemish; a benevolence as wide as human need for human help; and a humility which never thought or said to any one "Stand aside, I am holier than thou."

He was pre-eminently one,

> "Who traveled on life's common way
> In cheerful godliness, and yet his heart
> The heaviest burdens on herself did lay."

He had none of the morbid egotism, or vociferous benevolence, with the wordy expression of which, so many are content and self-approving,

> "Who sigh for wretchedness, yet shun the wretched,
> Nursing in some delicious solitude
> Their dainty loves, and slothful sympathies."

He was not content with the utterance of merely sentimental sympathy with mankind in general everywhere, or a profession of zeal for the whole human race, with a personal disregard of all who did not promote his interest or pleasure, or gratify his vanity. He served and benefited those who were within his reach, and although nothing human was alien to him, to the

humanity he found nearest to him he gave his first service, and to this House of Refuge, to the Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons, to the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, and to the Apprentices' Library, he gave constant and unremitting devotion.

The value of a life thus passed we cannot fully measure, nor can we duly estimate the aggregate result of the work of our great philanthropic organizations.

In the many charities with which Mr. Barclay was connected his associates in their direction sometimes held different theological tenets and observed different modes of worship; and while their beliefs did not meet on all sides, yet in the central and directing truths of religious faith they were in sympathy.

Mr. Barclay was ever fully persuaded of the truth of his own convictions, and while his orthodoxy and earnestness were never doubted or questioned, he respected the convictions of those with whom he did not agree in all respects. He accepted the words of Christ as the definition of Christianity, and in obedience to their directions he gave willing service to humanity with that catholicity of spirit which is taught by Christ.

It is well for us that the sphere of spiritual truth lies beyond that of mere intellectual speculation, and that on that ground, may those of different sects meet in unity of spirit, and in the bonds of peace.

Mr. Barclay always felt and expressed an interest in the great discoveries and inventions which during his long life had so materially affected human welfare. He often spoke of these important events, regarding it as a valuable privilege to have lived in an age which had made such an impress on history, and above all he rejoiced that in this age, Christian philanthropy had developed so largely as to have become the element in modern society that will protect it from the dangers and vicissitudes of the older civilizations, and extend the lessons of peace on earth and good-will to men throughout the world.

This imperfect portraiture would be more imperfect, if I did not say that Mr. Barclay was a lover of books and a reader of

the best literature. Books were his companions of whom he never tired, and to extreme old age with unabated charm they beguiled his lonely hours. He was familiar with the English classics, especially the poetry of the last and the beginning of this century. His memory was stored with choice passages, which he often used as appropriate illustrations. He was a reader of general literature, and before his great deafness had deprived him of the pleasure of conversation he was a ready and fluent talker and agreeable companion. To those who have been in his office on Sixth Street, as many of you have, it is needless that I say that he was during his mature life a constant and large buyer and collector of books and pamphlets, and I may add of printed matter of any kind, and of every language, ancient and modern.

These had so gathered in many years that they were piled from floor to roof where there could be found space for them, and the accumulated dust of years, I was going to say of ages, rested on them, and they were also in great quantity and number in his bedroom, in boxes and packages on shelves and tables, and at the last, when his soul had passed to the unseen world, and his lifeless body lay there in that room, the pathetic verse of Longfellow could be applied to him:

"Dead he lay among his books,
The peace of God was in his looks.

"As the statues in the gloom,
Watch o'er Maximilian's tomb,

"So these volumes from their shelves,
Watched him, silent as themselves.

"Let the lifeless body rest,
He is gone who was its guest.

"Traveler, in what realm of space,
Shines the light upon thy face?

"In what garden of delight,
Rest thy weary feet to-night;

"Lying dead among thy books,
The peace of God, in all thy looks?"

As the shadows lengthened on Mr. Barclay's path toward the setting sun, he missed the old familiar faces, and so he walked until he became the survivor of all the friends of his youth, and seemed to stand on a pedestal of melancholy isolation.

A few months preceding his death, his increasing bodily infirmities impaired his powers of locomotion, and during this time I saw him frequently. He was conscious that death was near, and he did not fear its approach ; and soon more debility and languor brought the hour, when that could go no farther, and then with calm serenity of spirit, came the solemn close of his earthly life.

I learn that some surprise has been expressed, that with his extreme age and obvious nearness to death, he did not speak of, or allude to it. To this I reply, that he was not in the habit of talking of himself, or of his own feelings, or spiritual experiences at any time. In fact, he was singularly reticent in regard of anything relating only to himself. To some of his most intimate friends he did say, that he was fully conscious that he would soon penetrate the solemn mystery which lies beyond this life, but so near to it. He was quite ready to depart, and he had no desire to live beyond the period of his usefulness. He had passed beyond the love of life, and fear of death.

I would now like to say to the boys and girls of the House of Refuge:

It is the memory of your friend and benefactor, we have met here to-day to honor. You will not see his face here again, or hear his voice speaking to you in kindness as you so often did, but you can express your gratitude, and profit by the lessons he gave you, and while it is not within my province, or ability to preach to you, I would say that which I am sure Mr. Barclay has often said to you, and ask you to keep in your memories the words of the psalms and hymns and scripture texts he gave you; and as you come into this room and read the honored name on that tablet, I trust you will recall the lessons you have heard from his lips, and that the truths of the Chris-

tian religion he taught you, may sink into your inmost hearts; and so affect and control your conduct, that your future lives may be spent in obedience to the Divine will, and so may he, who devoted his own life to your highest welfare be made a blessing to you even in his death, and you, become the partakers of his joy in the great Resurrection.

In that ancient church in which in childhood he was given in baptism to his Lord and Saviour, and in early manhood publicly dedicated himself to the service of Christ, the body of the aged man rested, while the solemn burial service of his Church was read, and then without ostentation or parade his mortal remains were conveyed to their final rest in Christ Church burial-ground. Although no lofty column is placed above that unnoticed grave to record his deeds of mercy, nor will his name appear in our nation's history, yet when that book of the future now concealed from human eye shall be opened, doubtless the name on that memorial tablet will be seen and recognized as the helpful friend of such as most needed help.

The life we have been contemplating was not one of show or parade of any kind. It did not claim the homage given to superior intellectual power or culture. It received few honors from the world and none of the world's emoluments, and yet the influence of that self-consecrated life will extend far beyond the period of its earthly duration, and if not honored by man it was honored by God, to live nearer to Him than do many of the human race.

For sixty years Mr. Barclay has been the zealous friend of this House of Refuge, and this memorial tablet now exposed to your view will remain to keep his name in grateful remembrance, and as this Institution, so largely the creation of his mind and heart, will become busier in its ministries of mercy, the memory and the example of its early and faithful friend will remain to inspire and prosper its work.

When men such as Mr. Barclay depart this life, they do not die to those who have felt their influence, and their benefits to the living do not cease with their mortal breath, and through

the cherished memories of what they have said and done, clothed with the sanctity which the solemn mystery of death has thrown around them, they being dead, yet speak with authority, to enforce the lessons they gave when living.

The children sang the doxology and a benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Dr. Davies.